## WE ENVISION A LYNDALE AVENUE SOUTH THAT...

Blends the area's natural beauty, existing resources and future development to create attractive well-maintained spaces with a distinct sense of place;

Encourages a neighborhoodfriendly transportation environment that emphasizes pedestrian activities while accommodating vehicles;

Fosters
neighborhoodfocused businesses
and a development
climate that meets
the needs of all
residents.

## LYNDALE AVENUE SOUTH REVITALIZATION - CREEK TO CROSSTOWN

(LASRCC)

## **Community Vision, Values and Engagement**

Final Documentation, Phase I, June 2002

A joint project of: The Center for Policy, Planning, & Performance and The Institute of Cultural Affairs – MN.

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#### Introduction

In February of 2002, NRP issued and RFP for a community engagement process for the LASRCC Project. After interviewing several firms, a citizens' committee comprise of representatives from the four neighborhoods, Kenny, Lynnhurst, Tangletown and Windom, chose Linda Alton and Jonathan Bucki as consultants for the project. They designed a process to meet the committee's requirements.

On February 12, 2002, the LASRCC committee first met, discussed the and outlined the process, reviewed the history of previous efforts, drafted and agreed to some process values, appointed a leadership committee, and then outlined a five month calendar for the process. The leadership committee, the "Facilicaterers" met between committee meeting with the consultants. The leadership committee decided that they would propose to the committee to radically change the March 26 meeting, turning it into a community meeting where the community helped develop the vision.

At the next committee meeting, February 26, the committee accepted the leadership teams proposal and got to work organizing an event for March 26. Out of the data gathered from that community meeting, the committee drafted a vision, assigned a ranking to different parts of the vision, and drafted some short term and long term goals. On June 11, the committee invited the community to review their work, help them discern where energy for action was, further refine goals for the immediate and distant horizons, and sign up to participate in various community task forces.

The committee meetings were attended by a core group of neighborhood representatives, with a few occasional business owners and residents. The community wide meetings had in attendance in excess of 100 people at the March 26 meeting and approximately 50 people at the June 11 meeting.

The documents that follow are the products of this process. Each piece of the process holds meaning for the participants in the process and, more and more, in the community at large.

## February 12, 2002: Committee Kickoff, Reflection and Process Values

#### **Salient Details and Decisions**

## Hopes and Expectations for the 5 month process include:

- Establish common vision for community
- Accurately portray this history and context
- Great process everyone can agree on
- Guidelines for development
- Engage all sorts of people and ideas

- Vision of unity and cohesion
- Increase enthusiasm in community
- Build/capitalize on natural assets (lake, creek)
- "Walk to" shopping/living in community vision
- Deal with hotels on Lyndale Ave.

## A brief recap of the recent 'history' of the Lyndale Ave. So. Project

#### "Frustrations" noted included:

- While the value of the neighborhood has increased, the commercial strip has declined
- Watching the NRP and its process, knowing that it would be next to impossible to bring energy and funding to the intersection point of FOUR neighborhoods
- 8 years and...NOTHING!
- The neighborhoods are just not maintained well!
- Where are the signs...where is the welcoming? Where are the pedestrian lights?
- Miscommunication lies!
- No comprehensive plan
- Battling councilpersons this is no longer a problem

## **Breakthroughs noted included:**

- The vitality and excitement we now see... lots of NEW!
- The Boulevard Project IS coming!
- The clinic is moving out this is an opportunity for businesses to come in
- Kowalski's IS buying in.
- Wharton Volvo is staying for next 5 years
- We need to make sure businesses are honored!

# What process pieces would you "keep" from this history?

- Community based
- Stakeholders have input
- Developers holding pattern
- Build on past into next phase

# What would you "Throw"?

- Easy-fix approach
- Community input was disregarded
- Consultants had own agenda
- Disconnect of community and consultant's values
- Certain voices LOUD
- Special interest voices LOUD
- Giving power to bureaucrats

# **Process Values – Adopted by the Committee, February 12, 2002**

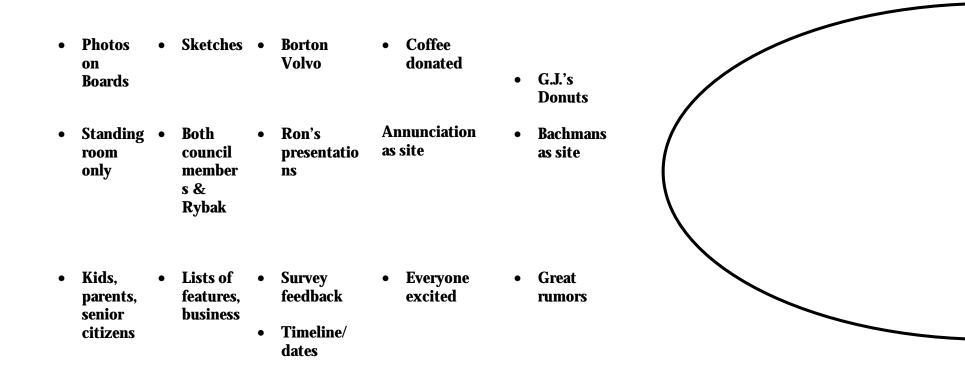
What process values, g	What process values, guidelines, and behaviors do we want to practice in the next 5 months to help us reach our 5-month goals?							
Fair and open process	Respect for each other	Positive individual and group culture	Efficient organized process	Commitment and focus of a core group				
Individual ideas included:								
<ul> <li>Inclusive</li> <li>Fair consideration of minority views</li> <li>Build trust with property business owners</li> <li>Open and inclusive</li> <li>Everyone participates</li> <li>Equal voices (members and neighborhoods)</li> <li>Awareness of non-participants</li> <li>Community-based</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Respect</li> <li>Respectful discourse</li> <li>Listen</li> <li>Considerate</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Innovative and unique</li> <li>Casual and open</li> <li>Ask questions</li> <li>No bad suggestions (open process)</li> <li>Positive</li> <li>Portray enthusiasm to public</li> <li>Humor</li> <li>Empathetic</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Respectful of time</li> <li>Stay on task</li> <li>Open but organized</li> <li>Respect differences in opinion</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Consistency</li> <li>Consistent group</li> <li>Attendance</li> <li>Newcomers (?)</li> </ul>				

# February 26, 2002: Engaging the Community to Develop a Vision

The committee spent the majority of the time organizing a March 26 event. The consultants facilitated a planning and organizing process.

They set for themselves and vision of March 26, and then organized action teams around it.

## **Vision for March 26**



# March 26, 2002: Community Meeting, A Vision for Lyndale

At the March community meeting, data was collected from community members. Then, this data was sorted by a sub-committee of the LASRCC committee, which then named the various patterns. At the following committee meeting, the committee organized the data and adopted it as a draft vision.

April 9, 2002: Drafting the Vision

	. Draiting the							
ATTRACTIVE ORG BLENDING THE ENVIRO	GREEN & BUILT DNMENT	PRESERVING, ENHANCING & INCREASING GREENSPACE	DISTINCTIVE COMMUNITY FEEL	Making Lyndale Work for Walkers	EFFICIENTLY CONTROLLED MULTI-USE TRANSPORTATION	BALANCED RETAIL, SERVICES, OFFICES AND HOUSING	VARIED HOUSING OPTIONS INCLUDING THE NEEDS OF SENIORS	NEIGHBORHOOD FOCUSED SMALL BOX BUSINESSES
Wide sidewalks with trees and shrubs.      Tree-lined, well-lighted unobstructed, pedestrian	Image appropriate to natural surroundings & boulevard      Uniformity of the	Greenspace     Emphasize the creek     Landscaping greenspace	Benefit quality of life for residents of the area     Community building     Enhancing a sense of	Pedestrian friendly     Safety: traffic pedestrian friendly     Activity on the	Re-establish street grid at Lyndale.      Safety      Rus to downtown on	Mixed residential and retail     Mixed use projects     Integrated and varied.	Senior transition     housing     Smart residential     Housing that is	Community focused and locally owned and operated      Small businesses useful
trees and shrubs.	natural surroundings &	•Emphasize the creek	for residents of the area	Safety: traffic pedestrian	Lyndale.	retail	housing	locally owned and
	Benches Well lit Keep old fashioned look Aesthetics, cleanliness, greenery, signage, lighting Flowing water or fountains on the sidewalk.			Safety pedestrian     friendly, esp crosswalks     Pedestrian friendly     architecture     Underground parking     and pedestrian skyway or     bridges     Safety lighting     I want reasons to walk     on Lyndale.				should be removed from area.

# April 30, 2002: Engaging Others and Goals

The committee worked to develop a vision based on the community's input. Vision elements were named and sub points were ranked defined using salient points from the community input.

WE ENVISION	WE ENVISION A LYNDALE AVENUE SOUTH THAT							
BLENDS THE AREA'S NATURAL BEAUTY, EXISTING RESOURCES AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TO CREATE ATTRACTIVE WELL-MAINTAINED SPACES WITH A DISTINCT SENSE OF PLACE; (ELEMENT A.)		ENVIRONMENT T PEDESTRIAN AC ACCOMMODAT	NSPORTATION HAT EMPHASIZES	FOSTERS NEIGHBORHOOD-FOCUSED BUSINE		EETS THE NEEDS		
Attractive organized design blending the green and built environment (2)	Preserving, enhancing and increasing greenspace (1)	Distinctive community feel	Making Lyndale work for walkers (5)  (5)  Efficiently controlled multiuse transportation (4)		Balanced retail, services offices and housing (3)	Varied Housing Options including the needs of seniors (6)	Neighborhood Focused Small Box Businesses	
'Salient' points of  ☆Develop a neighborhood with consistent and cohesive design elements.  ☆Create a natural environment which capitalizes on the area's existing resources	each category draw  Chink the natural resources so that residents can enjoy enhanced greenspaces that emphasize the community's amenities.  Blend existing and future development with the natural amenities of the community.	The system of the March 2 Attractive community gathering places which lend to a sense of place and belonging.	26 community brain  ☆Create a "Lyndale Corridor" where pedestrians feel welcome and safe.  ☆Encourage development that makes Lyndale a place for pedestrians to visit and savor.  ☆Provide creative solutions for separating vehicle and pedestrian activities.	Exercourage a transportation environment sensitive to all modes of transportation.  Neighborhood safety is a critical component.	Encourage small businesses that support the needs of the community. Create a balance of goods and services that encourage residential use of the Lyndale area.	Develop mixed housing types for mixed income residents which are moderate size and scale, and compatible with the surroundings.	☐ Foster businesses with a community focus, local ownership, operated to provide for the retail and service needs of immediate n'hood ☐ Develop a plan to maintain the traditional n'hood business values while welcoming appropriate development.	

# May 14, 2002: Community Goals and Objectives

The committee met and drafted these goals. They also organized for the June 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. The mayor and council members representing the neighborhoods were also in attendance.

LASR-CC Shared Vision and Goals (Note: the bold items were noted as the potential 'pressure points' in the system, which would " light up" many other areas when implemented)						
We envision a Lyndale Avenue So. that	Goals: 1 Year	Goals: 3 Years	Goals: 5 years			
A. Blends the area's natural beauty, existing resources and future development to create attractive well-maintained spaces with a distinct sense of place	<ul> <li>Inventory Businesses &amp; Land use</li> <li>Establish Business         Association</li> <li>Conduct Parking inventory</li> <li>Survey – What do people want as businesses?</li> <li>Architect for business</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Traffic calming for Lyndale</li> <li>Track Neighborhood         Demographics</li> <li>Bus Routes</li> <li>Develop Design Standards</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Context-Sensitive Design of Lyndale</li> <li>Encourage adaptive re-use of Bridge</li> </ul>			
B. Encourages a neighborhood- friendly transportation environment that emphasizes pedestrian activities while accommodating vehicles;	<ul> <li>Investigate bike lane, coordinated</li> <li>Flower plantings</li> <li>Landscape architects to speak</li> <li>Paint crosswalks</li> <li>Clean up, fix posts, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Coordinate with Lyndale         Task Force     </li> <li>Plant trees</li> <li>Hwy 121 Traffic Studies</li> <li>Encourage screened parking</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Streetscape lighting</li> <li>3+ years re-do Lyndale</li> <li>Bike racks</li> <li>Benches</li> <li>Parking ramp</li> </ul>			
C. Fosters neighborhood- focused businesses and a development climate that meets the needs of all residents.	<ul> <li>Trash containers</li> <li>Trash pick up</li> <li>Regular maintenance</li> <li>Lyndale 'Bath'</li> <li>Ordinance compliance</li> <li>Reading area near library and Creek</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Bus shelters</li> <li>News boxes</li> <li>Flags</li> <li>Signage</li> <li>Exterior improvements</li> <li>View of the Creek</li> <li>Natural over-all design scheme</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Sewer covers</li> <li>New bridgeor improved Bridge</li> </ul>			

In reflecting on the process, these were some of the comments made about the process.

- We started as a demilitarized zone 4 neighborhoods and no neighborhood. Now... I look at what we have as a 'community asset', rather than a n'hood asset
- In 5 months.... We didn't get bogged down...2 n'hood meetings, a clean-up, a Vision and some goals! Wow.
- !How different and exciting it is to channel/manage change
- Finding a number of people that had the same issues and wanted to spend time working on them
- What can happen if people can work together without prior opinions come together with a blank slate
- The finest democracy effort I have been a part of, community building at its highest level
- The most functional email group I have ever seen
- I am now more committed than ever to the power of residents
- This has helped refresh my faith in community process
- Amazing what individuals, when they divide up the tasks, can do. A Huge Process is do-able!
- It is possible for a group of 12-18 people to stay focused
- Linda and Jonathan kept us focused it was a pleasant experience, worked well!
- I'm impressed by the group's process, yet I'm still cynical a bit. I enjoyed getting to know folks from other neighborhoods
- Impressed with the amount of energy that was put into this, yet this can either implode or explode!
- ....and now we are a snowball, and people are jumping on! (The Mayor, etc.)
- Bud: There's no thud here!

## June 11, 2002: Community Meeting Checking In and Moving Forward.

The committee hosted a community meeting to check-in with the community, to find out if they have been on the right track with the vision, and to find out where energy was for specific goals. At the end of the meeting, participants were invited to demonstrate which of the goals (from previous meetings and additional) were the most willing to commit energy to. Then participants were given an opportunity to sign up for different task forces. The leadership group from the committee has taken these lists and begun organizing people for continued action. The numbers in parenthesis indicate the number of voting "dots" that people used to indicate their interests. Each participant received several dots. At the meeting, along with the committee members, approximately fifty (50) people showed up and seventeen (17) new community members signed up for one of the vision elements' teams.

We envision a Lyndale Avenue So. that	Goals: 1 YEAR	3 YEARS	5 YEARS
A. Blends the area's natural beauty, existing resources and future development to create attractive well-maintained spaces with a distinct sense of place	<ul> <li>Neighborhood signs (2)</li> <li>Food carts, benches, light posts with flowers, flags, n'hood banner (3)</li> <li>Business' clean up (4)</li> <li>Land-owner commitment (6)</li> <li>Community/area name contest (3)</li> <li>Welcome to N'hood sign (3)</li> <li>Create a theme: Lilacs on Lyndale! (4)</li> <li>Finance a Design Plan (3)</li> <li>Market the concepts (2)</li> <li>Take down billboards at 54th and Lyndale (2)</li> <li>Funding alternatives (3)</li> <li>Find volunteers (1)</li> <li>Kids events (2)</li> <li>Crime reduction (6)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Winter park/sliding hill at Lyndale and Parkway (2)</li> <li>Landscaping (2</li> <li>Connect the water: creek to grass lake (10)</li> </ul>	Activity     Center     "Community     based" (1)     Gateway (2)     Blending cre     with Lyndale     (1)
B. Encourages a neighborhood-friendly transportation environment that emphasizes pedestrian activities while accommodating vehicles	<ul> <li>Painted Crosswalks (3)</li> <li>Greenspace, reading area across Lyndale from Library in apt. bldg green space (4)</li> <li>Greenspace in Fairview Diamond Lake Clinic</li> <li>Lighting (2)</li> <li>More, attractive, lower street lighting (1)</li> <li>Good smooth sidewalks (2)</li> <li>Crosswalks – timing, marking (5)</li> <li>Bike path – connects to creek (3)</li> <li>Save pedestrian crossings (6)</li> <li>Pedestrian signal buttons on stop lights (3)</li> </ul>	Expand/widen sidewalks	Expand/widsidewalks
C. Fosters neighborhood focused businesses and a development climate that meets the needs of all residents.	<ul> <li>Business development – organize who's already here (1)</li> <li>Identify what new business could be a good fit (14)</li> <li>Improved business signs (1)</li> <li>Revaluate land use – design alternate (motels) (9)</li> <li>Farmer's Market (8)</li> <li>Highway 121- get info, get control, get ideas (16)</li> <li>Create a design plan for mixed housing, addressing no hi rises, mixed income, seniors can stay in n'hood, walk to shops, starter homes, housing (12)</li> </ul>	• Small movie house (5)	• Cohesive façade for small businesses — 'old town fee (3)

# Summary of Questionnaire Data from March 26, 2002 Meeting

Questionnaires were distributed at the meeting in order to collect data from the community. A total of sixty-two questionnaires were completed at the meeting. Tangletown was the one neighborhood that had very few questionnaires completed. The first question was which of the four neighborhoods do you live? Lynnhurst residents had the strongest representation in the questionnaires.

	Windom	Kenny	Lynnhurst	Tangletown	Other
# of Responses	14	17	24	5	2

The questionnaire asked how often you travel on Lyndale, Creek to Crosstown?

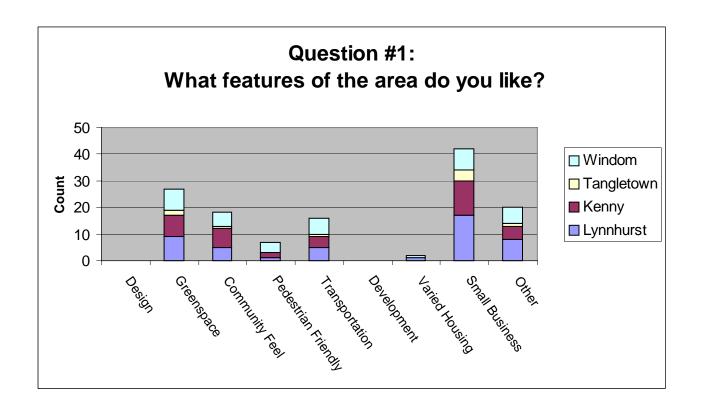
A significant amount of the responders said they travel to the area on a daily basis. A summary of the responses is provided in the table below. The data represents the frequency of visits to the neighborhood businesses as well as the frequency of travel along Lyndale Avenue.

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Other
# of Responses	52	8	0	2

The questionnaire asked what means of travel do you use? The highest response was by car followed by walking. This demonstrated a concern for traffic and parking in the area. It also demonstrated the use of small businesses in close proximity to the residents. A summary of the responses is provided in the following table.

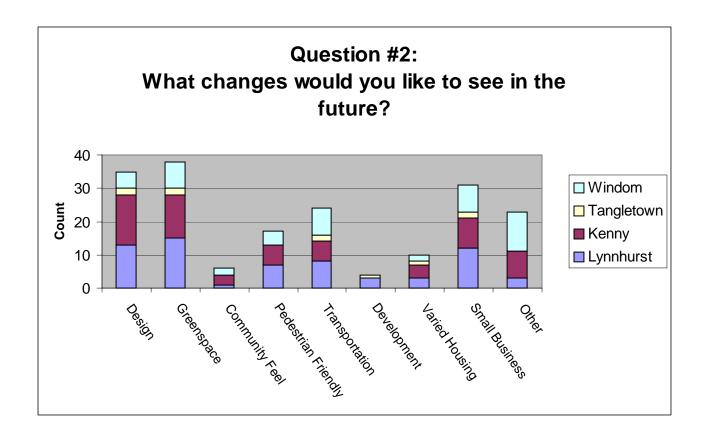
	Walk	Bike	Car	Bus
# of Responses	50	30	61	14

A series of questions were asked and the comments from the questions were grouped into nine categories that relate to the data collected from the March 26 meeting. Question #1: What features of the area do you like? Small businesses had a total of 42 comments, greenspace had 27 comments, and other had 20 comments. The small business comments were directed towards local, small, and a variety type of services. The comments on greenspace were focused on Minnehaha Creek. The other comments were primarily related to the library.

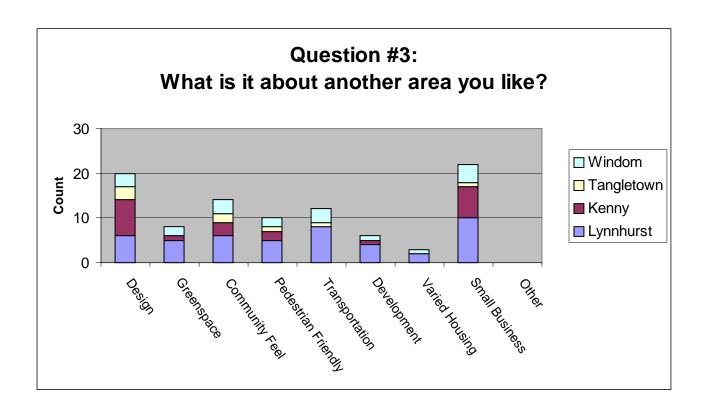


Question #2: What changes would you like to see in the future? Overwhelmingly, greenspace, design, and small business had 38, 35, and 31 comments respectively. This is an indication that people would like to see an improvement to the design and greenspace. A need for a variety of small neighborhood businesses was also demonstrated in the data. Transportation and other were also rated high. The

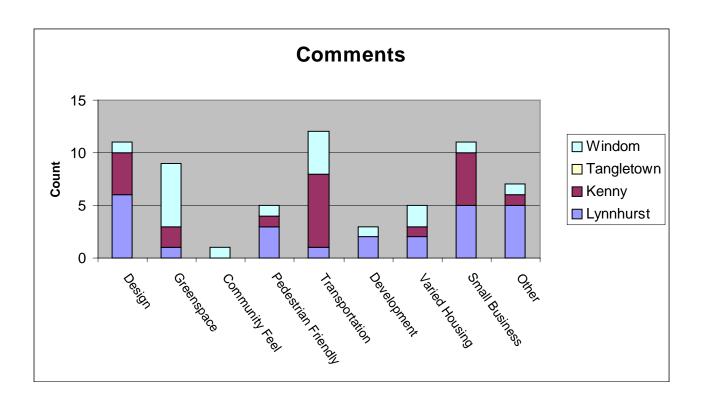
comments in transportation related to traffic calming, parking, and bike paths. The other category related to clean area, billboards, and removal of the motels.



Question #3: What is it about another area you like? Small businesses and design were at the top of the list with 22 and 20 comments respectively. Community feel and transportation followed with 14 and 12 comments respectively. Business areas most often sited were Linden Hills, 50<sup>th</sup> and France, and Grand Avenue St. Paul. Others sited were Uptown, Wayzata, and Hyland Park.



The questionnaire also provided room for additional comments. The comments centered on transportation, small business, design, and greenspace. Comments in the other category focused on open process, long range planning, and public/private partnership.



**SUMMARY:** The questionnaire data focused on four areas, small business, greenspace, design, and transportation. The data overwhelmingly demonstrated the desire to have small neighborhood businesses along Lyndale Avenue South. The respondents commented that they not only like the current businesses in the neighborhood but also would like to see the neighborhood theme continued in the future. However, one current business in the area does not appeal to the community. The questionnaires included several comments about the removal of the motels.

Other features the community would like to see enhanced were greenspace and design. The community values Minnehaha Creek as an amenity to the neighborhoods. They also value an attractive design along Lyndale Avenue. Common themes focused on attractive lighting, enhanced storefronts, public art, and unified signage.

Transportation also demonstrated a concern for the neighborhoods. Comments in regards to transportation varied among traffic calming, off-street parking, bike paths, and safe crosswalks.

## **Consultant Notes & Participant Process Evaluation**

What an exciting process! It has been a great privilege to participate in and watch four neighborhoods come together, agree to a core set of values, and then work together to engage the community to articulate a vision for a central part of their shared living space. The leadership of the group has generated an environment of engagement, participation and excitement. They have also positioned themselves for political strength by combing thinking and resources, and by working across arbitrary boundaries.

At the final meeting of the committee, we asked them to reflect on their process values. Nine people responded. Everyone felt the process had been fair and open, 100% thought it was Good or Excellent. Likewise, 100% thought the committee did a Good or Excellent job maintaining a positive individual and group culture. Nearly everyone rated the group's respect for one another as Excellent. Most felt the process was efficient and organized, rating it Good or Excellent. One person felt that in this area, the committee was Fair. Finally, everyone rated their behavior as Good or Excellent with respect to their ability to maintain the commitment and focus of a core group of people. Participant's written comments also reflected a good experience.

The final community meeting on June 11 was a marvelous coming together of people from the four neighborhoods. Over 50 people attended along with the committee, and 17 new people signed up for task groups to move from vision to action. Fewer than ten people at the June 11 meeting were at the March 26th meeting. This clearly demonstrates a widening of interest in the work and a larger engagement. These groups seem to be gathering momentum of their own, and their ranks keep on growing. Committee members have reported that people who couldn't be at the June 11 meeting have called them and volunteered to help in some way.

We feel, at this point, that the Committee and the project is in good hands, with a leadership committee from the four neighborhoods who are already engaged in moving the next phase of this project forward. In our minds, there has been a clear shift away from dependence on us as consultants to guide the process, and to a citizen lead and facilitated process. The work has been exciting to watch.

Another subtle, but powerful shift we have seen is that the "next steps" for this group are so much bigger than developing a comprehensive land use plan, which was the original intention. Although that planning process still exists as a powerful part of their intention, the committee has already taken action on things they believe they can change from their roles as citizens, as consumers of city services, as politically savvy activists, and as neighborhood leaders. This group couldn't stop if it wanted to; too many eyes are watching, and too many people have jumped at the call for a better Lyndale Avenue South.

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# **Committee Membership List**

#### **Leadership Team:**

Mary Ubl, coordinator Taaron Iverson

Dan Quirk, just-in-case-Mary-can't coordinator

Bud Rosenfield

Jeff Fox

#### **Committee Membership:**

Jan Bartels Ron Lischeid

Barbara Gabler David Poretti

Tom Gerhard Suzanne Rhees

Bob Krouth Glenni Sprague

## **Representation and Staff**

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Julia Blount, Aide to Council Member Lane

Council Member Scott Benson, 11<sup>th</sup> Ward

Kerri Pearce Rusch, Aide to Hennepin County Commissioner

Gail Dorfman John Dyvbig, Aide to Council Member Benson

John Harrington, Project Coordinator III, Minneapolis MCDA Council Member Barret Lane, 13<sup>th</sup> Ward

Bob Miller, Director, Minneapolis NRP

Peg Moutin, Neighborhood Specialist II, Minneapolis NRP

Fred Neet, Planner, Minneapolis Planning Department